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MINUTES OF THE BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE
SOUTH BATTERY PARK CITY RESILIENCY PROJECT
PUBLIC HEARING

MAY 19 - 6:00 P.M.

Held Virtually Via Zoom
-----X

B E F O R E:

B.J. JONES, President & Chief Executive Officer
GWEN DAWSON, Vice President, Real Property
CLAUDIA FILOMENA, Director of Capital Projects
NORA MADONICK, Chief Executive Officer and
Lead Strategist at Arch Street
Communications

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RENE DUCKER	37
JOSEPH SMITH	53
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PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 MS. MADONICK: Welcome. Thank
3 you for attending the public hearing
4 on the Draft Environmental Impact
5 Statement for the South Battery Park
6 City Resiliency Project. The Battery
7 Park City Authority appreciates your
8 interest in the project and your
9 participation in tonight's hearing.
10 Tonight's hearing is being recorded,
11 and any comments made tonight will be
12 included in the project's official
13 records. My name is Nora Madonick
14 from Arch Street Communications and
15 I'll be facilitating tonight's
16 hearing.

17 Tonight we're joined by B.J.
18 Jones and Gwen Dawson from Battery
19 Park City Authority, as well
20 representatives of the project team.
21 Rene Ducker and Rachel Dencker from
22 AECOM, which prepared the DEIS, will
23 give a brief presentation about the
24 project and the DEIS.

25 In the virtual format of

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 tonight's hearing, the presentation
3 will cover the same information that
4 BPCA would have shared at an
5 in-person public hearing. But
6 tonight's comment process will be
7 slightly different. I'll go over the
8 comment process shortly.

9 Materials related to the
10 project, including the DEIS, are
11 available on BPCA's website at
12 bpca.ny.gov on the Resiliency and
13 Sustainability page. The public
14 review and comment period on this
15 DEIS began May 4th, 2022, and will
16 end on June 3, 2022.

17 You may comment on the DEIS in
18 the following ways: You can make a
19 verbal comment tonight. Please note
20 BPCA will not be providing any
21 responses to comments or questioning
22 this evening.

23 Each person who is registered
24 to comment tonight will have one
25 opportunity to speak for up to three

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 minutes. Questions and comments
3 received today will be addressed in
4 the final Environmental Impact
5 Statement.

6 If time allows tonight, we may
7 be able to hear additional comments
8 from those who did not preregister.
9 If you have not registered to speak
10 but you wish to comment tonight,
11 please enter your name, your email
12 and your address in the QA option of
13 the Zoom webinar. We will hear
14 comments in the order in which
15 commenters post their interest in
16 speaking.

17 Other ways to submit your
18 comments: You can mail written
19 comments to Claudia Filomena, BPCA's
20 Director of Capital Projects at 200
21 Liberty Street, 24th floor, New York,
22 New York, 10281; or you can email
23 Claudia at
24 claudia.filomena@bpca.ny.gov.

25 Comments made and questions

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 raised during tonight's public
3 hearing will be addressed in the
4 final Environmental Impact Statement
5 which is expected to be released in
6 summer 2022.

7 Can we go to the next slide,
8 please.

9 After a brief presentation
10 about the project and the DEIS, we
11 will open up the hearing for public
12 comment, and at that time I will go
13 over the process we will follow for
14 commenting in detail. But at this
15 time, I'd like to turn things over to
16 B.J. Jones, President and CEO of
17 Battery Park City Authority for
18 introductory comments. B.J.?

19 MR. JONES: Great. Thank you,
20 Nora.

21 Tonight is another important
22 step in our resiliency efforts.
23 We've made lot of progress on climate
24 adaptation, ranging from the
25 restoration work after Hurricane

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 Sandy and completion of new
3 resiliency measures at the ball
4 fields, to important policy and
5 planning advancements to both lay the
6 ground work for additional and
7 necessary resiliency measures, as
8 well as to fight climate change
9 proactively through our
10 sustainability efforts. But this is
11 not enough.

12 Next slide.

13 Battery Park City is vulnerable
14 as a coastal community, even more so
15 now as storms are getting more severe
16 and frequent. We are planning for
17 worse than Hurricane Sandy. Recent
18 data from Colorado State University,
19 which has issued forecasts of
20 Atlantic Basin hurricane activity for
21 over 37 years, make it even clearer
22 that we can not afford to be
23 complacent. Their forecast for 2022
24 hurricane activity is above average
25 for the seventh year in a row, an

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 alarming trend.

3 Next slide.

4 This shows the potential
5 inundation we can expect locally as
6 the result of a hundred year storm.
7 You can see why we need to take
8 urgent action to protect lives,
9 homes, schools, public spaces, jobs,
10 infrastructure, and more in Battery
11 Park City and beyond.

12 Next slide.

13 We've conducted numerous public
14 sessions over the last several years
15 on this project and have actively
16 engaged stakeholders on our
17 ridiculous efforts since 2017. And
18 we appreciate the partnership of the
19 Community Board in this effort,
20 particularly the Battery Park City
21 and Environmental Protection
22 Committees, as well as other
23 stakeholders from the neighborhood.

24 We've also held many town haul
25 meetings of our own. Our

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 presentations and meetings are all
3 online, including recordings, as well
4 as reporters and designs and more.

5 Next slide.

6 This work also requires
7 incredibly close collaboration with
8 City and State partners. We can't do
9 this without their help, and we
10 appreciate your interests and your
11 comments this evening.

12 Thank you. And Nora, I'll now
13 turn it back to you.

14 MS. MADONICK: Thank you, B.J.
15 I'm going to turn things over to
16 Rachel Dencker of AECOM. Rachel,
17 would you like to take over?

18 MS. DENCKER: Oh, sorry. Hi,
19 I'm Rachel Dencker. Thank you all
20 for participating today and allowing
21 us to introduce you to this important
22 New York City project.

23 I'm Rachel Dencker, Senior
24 Project Manager for the AECOM design
25 team.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 We would like to begin by
3 providing an overview of the Battery
4 Park City Authority Resiliency
5 Projects, and then focusing our
6 conversation on the South Battery
7 Park City project.

8 So looking at the screen, you
9 can see on the northern side we have
10 the Battery Park City Ball Field
11 Resiliency Project there in gray, and
12 then if you look further north,
13 you'll see that the original line
14 which runs all the way down the
15 western side of Manhattan is the
16 Northwest Battery Park City
17 Resiliency Project. It then connects
18 to our South Battery Park City
19 Resiliency Project there in gray,
20 which we'll now focus our
21 conversation on.

22 The South Battery Park City
23 Project represents one of several
24 projects that are within the overall
25 Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 Master Plan. The South Battery Park
3 Resiliency Project is being designed
4 to provide flood risk reduction
5 within the project area for the
6 current hundred year floor, increased
7 intensity, and frequency of rainfall,
8 coastal surge, and predicted sea
9 level rise.

10 The South Battery Park
11 Resiliency Project is also being
12 designed with adaptability for the
13 2050 hundred year storm event at such
14 time as the Northwest Battery Park
15 Resiliency Project is completed and a
16 tie in between the two projects is
17 created.

18 Please note that the project
19 utilizes the same design criteria as
20 other New York City flood resiliency
21 projects such as ESCR and BMCR.

22 The project will be receiving
23 FEMA accreditation. This
24 accreditation is directly from FEMA,
25 and confirms the specified flood risk

PUBLIC HEARING

reduction is met.

Next slide.

The purpose and need of today's project is to provide a reliable coastal flood control system to provide risk reduction to property, residence and assets within the vicinity of South Battery Park City in response to the designed storm event. It is to protect and preserve, to the maximum extent practicable, open space resources and opportunities to view and interact with Manhattan's water front, particularly in Wagner Park, Pier A Plaza and the Battery, and avoid or minimize disruption to existing below and above ground infrastructure from flood events.

Next slide.

It's also important for us to remind you of what the existing topography in Lower Manhattan looks like. So in this slide you'll see a

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 range of colors that demonstrates the
3 surface elevation of the existing
4 topography of the site. I want to
5 point out to you the lowest
6 topography, specifically in Wagner
7 Park, which you'll notice is in pink,
8 and it is right at the tip at a plus
9 seven foot surface elevation. And
10 then the other very important
11 elevation to make everybody aware of
12 is the plus four, which is in Pier A
13 Plaza, there in purple.

14 Next slide.

15 Another important aspect for
16 everybody to also understand is the
17 coastal modelling for our 2050
18 condition. So on the left-hand side
19 you'll see what current conditions
20 look like today. So in turquoise,
21 what that's showing is the surface
22 elevation of roughly about six to
23 seven feet in elevation on the
24 left-hand side. Then in the 2050
25 hundred year storm event with sea

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 level rise, you'll see full
3 inundation of the area. In orange
4 you'll see the whole area is
5 completely inundated with an
6 elevation of anywhere between 13 to
7 15 feet in elevation.

8 Next slide.

9 So once we were able to
10 conclude our coastal modelling and
11 analysis, we were able to understand
12 the design flood elevations that were
13 required to meet our flood
14 mitigation. In order to do that, we
15 needed to start at First Place.

16 So if you notice on the
17 northern most portion of this where
18 Rene is pointing out, we have two
19 flip-up deployables, the first one
20 that goes across First Place that
21 then connects to that northwestern
22 area of the Museum of Jewish Heritage
23 that then connects to our glass top
24 flood wall that goes around the
25 Museum of Jewish Heritage.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 And then we need in the Wagner
3 Park area to meet the DFEs, we did
4 need to elevate this section by 10 to
5 12 feet due to the DFEs. And we're
6 going to bury the flood walls which
7 will be constructed beneath the
8 raised park, maximizing the protected
9 open space within that park.

10 We then connect to a series of
11 flip-up deployables that span across
12 Pier A Plaza. We then connect to an
13 exposed flood wall that then ties
14 into a bermed flood wall.

15 Next slide.

16 And here is a slide that shows
17 the five South Battery Park City
18 Resiliency Project segments as
19 defined in the DEIS, specifically
20 starting on the west side or the
21 north side, we have First Place, and
22 then moving east we go to the Museum
23 of Jewish Heritage, Wagner Park,
24 eastward to Pier A Plaza, and then
25 the Battery bikeway.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 In addition we also have
3 interior drainage improvements as
4 part of the project which we will
5 discuss a little bit later on.

6 And with that I'm going to hand
7 it over to Gonzalo Cruz who's our
8 lead landscape designer. Thank you.

9 MR. CRUZ: Thank you, Rachel.
10 So what we've done for you guys today
11 is to prepare series of walkthroughs
12 that describe the experiences of the
13 park, as well as the performative
14 components associated with flood
15 infrastructure and place-making.

16 So what we're going to do -- we
17 have about six animations describing
18 the physical environment for Wagner
19 Park, the pavilion, the Pier A inlet,
20 and the Pier A Plaza, the Battery.
21 And we hope that you get a really
22 clear understanding on how the
23 physical manifestation of all these
24 components come into play.

25 Now, we've done our best to

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1
2 ensure that the transition of these
3 animation come through without any
4 issues or problems. So what I
5 recommend is that you turn off your
6 videos just to ensure that you can be
7 transmitted, you have the best
8 experience watching the video. But
9 if you happen to run into a problem,
10 Battery Park City -- the Battery Park
11 City Authority will be making these
12 videos available online as early as
13 tomorrow. So no need to worry if
14 there are any glitches on your right
15 with the transmission.

16 And with that I'd like to start
17 the walkthroughs. I'm going to share
18 my screen and turn off my video. Let
19 me see -- please let me know if you
20 can see my screen. Yes? Perfect,
21 excellent, thank you.

22 So we're going to start with
23 the Museum of Jewish Heritage in
24 Wagner Park. So for each of the
25 animations we put together a diagram

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 that describes the sequence in which
3 we're walking through. As you can
4 see, for the most part, this
5 animation describes the experience
6 along the waterfront, as well as the
7 practices of putting into play for
8 flood infrastructure.

9 We're starting with the Museum
10 of Jewish Heritage. On the left you
11 see the flood infrastructure being
12 made of flood wall that has a
13 concrete base, and the majority of it
14 sitting on top of that concrete base
15 is a series of glass panels providing
16 and maximizing veracity to the Museum
17 of Jewish Heritage, while the
18 concrete bottom is actually being
19 screened by lots of plantings to
20 continue to invoke the sense of place
21 that we currently have.

22 As we move into the esplanade,
23 we immediately see Wagner Park on the
24 left. Moving through the esplanade
25 we continue to have a very wide

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 esplanade for maximum experience.

3 Just for reference, Battery
4 Park City has painted one of the
5 light poles to show what the level of
6 the height of the intervention will
7 be for Wagner Park. But I just
8 wanted to clarify that the height of
9 intervention is not actually
10 happening on the waterfront itself,
11 but it's happening on the park behind
12 the esplanade as it moves away to
13 various levels.

14 Due to the need to meet the
15 projected DFE and for coastal surge,
16 the park is being raised between 10
17 and 12 feet in elevation.

18 Here is right at the center of
19 the park in front of our social
20 seatings, we continue to have the
21 striking views of the Statue of
22 Liberty.

23 As we continue to walk south,
24 we enter -- we find the Pier A inlet
25 to the right. The Pier A inlet

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 brings an opportunity for a new
3 waterfront marine and habitat
4 education for the community. This
5 design converts an existing concrete
6 relieving platform and brick-wrapped
7 edge to a terrace condition that
8 improves habitat opportunity.

9 An observation deck has been
10 added to create 50 percent more light
11 that can actually pass through to
12 engage and encourage aquatic life.
13 This Pier A inlet feature seeks to
14 place a living shoreline which goes
15 in part with the growing New York
16 City movement to convert former
17 waterfronts into living shoreline.

18 As we move all the way south,
19 we get almost to the south end of
20 Wagner Park and Pier A inlet, and we
21 look back to the allee entrance in
22 the back along Battery Place for
23 Wagner Park.

24 Moving on to the next
25 walkthrough. What we would like to

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 describe with this next walk through
3 is the ability that the park -- that
4 the proposed park has in connection
5 with universal access and sustainable
6 practices along its planting.

7 As you see, we have many ways
8 to engage -- to engage into the park.
9 The park features a number of
10 sustainable elements. It provides
11 the opportunity to introduce salvage
12 elements as much as we can,
13 particularly with the stone
14 treatment, the paving colors and
15 materials selected to increase -- to
16 increases park's solar reflective
17 index, and it reduces the park's
18 contribution to heat island effect.
19 So all these things have been put
20 into play to provide performative
21 components to the park.

22 As you see when you move up
23 into the park, you have an
24 opportunity to understand its many
25 layers as it loops into the

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 esplanade. There are a lot of
3 opportunities for the community to
4 come together and perform activities
5 such as picnics, social engagement.
6 And ultimately, it blends into an
7 open lawn that provides flexible
8 opportunity for programming.

9 Site lining has been very
10 carefully chosen as well. In order
11 to reduce glare and enhance nighttime
12 view, we have selected materials to
13 actually enhance the nighttime view
14 of the harbor and the Statue of
15 Liberty.

16 Plantings have been focused
17 completely on native planting
18 systems. We have for -- we have
19 worked very closely with Battery Park
20 City Parks in ensuring that we have a
21 native array of planting design
22 treatments.

23 Here is a look on the upper
24 level, of the most top level of the
25 park where you can experience the

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 open lawn for flexible use. And
3 we've also found optimal locations to
4 relocate some of the wonderful
5 selection of outdoor sculptures that
6 Battery Park City has.

7 As we move all the way to the
8 south, we encounter yet another way
9 of engage with the park. Just to
10 note, there is an ADA accessible ramp
11 right next to the stairs. Right
12 through the stairs we can see the
13 Pier A inlet again where we were just
14 a few minutes earlier. There you get
15 a glimpse of the ADA accessible ramp
16 that gets you back up to the park on
17 this side. And we're exiting the
18 exact way we exited in the last loop,
19 in the previous animation, looking
20 back into the allee, the south allee
21 overlooking the building.

22 The next animation will
23 describe what it's actually like --
24 what it's like to engage into the
25 pavilion, another design component of

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 the large Resiliency Project, through
3 the allees that have been slightly
4 and very subtly raised to get you to
5 a main entrance to the park. As you
6 see, the south allee slowly moves up
7 into the center of the pavilion and
8 introduces an incredible gateway to
9 enter the park.

10 Here's where we make a turn,
11 looking down at the north allee which
12 is basically orchestrated in the same
13 way that the south allees is
14 orchestrated. And through this
15 gateway, the pavilion then allows for
16 an opportunity to enter the park at
17 its higher elevation.

18 We are landing on the flexible
19 central lawn. We're turning left to
20 look at the open lawn where we find
21 opportunities for -- a lot of
22 opportunities for shading and
23 flexible use. The lawn has been kept
24 open right at the center to allow for
25 the new shades to occur.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 And as we move up to the north,
3 we also find a lot of opportunities
4 for foliage, for shading, to be
5 surrounded by an environment that is
6 completely surrounded by native
7 planting material, which I think we
8 have been coordinating with Battery
9 Park City Parks.

10 We're now looking back down
11 north, just a glimpse. You see the
12 placement of sculptures by Tony
13 Cragg. The Louise Bourgeois
14 sculpture is right behind me at the
15 moment, which would -- an optimal
16 location, which is a wonderful piece
17 of artwork.

18 And I'd like to say a few
19 things about the pavilion now. So
20 I'm going to pause this for a second
21 so I can describe a few of the main
22 components.

23 The pavilion is also elevated
24 11 to 12 feet above grade. The key
25 focus of the design was to preserve

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 and protect, to a maximum extent
3 practicable, open space resources and
4 opportunities to view and interact
5 with Manhattan's waterfront,
6 particularly through Pier A Plaza,
7 Wagner Park and the Battery. The
8 design of the pavilion-type targets
9 ILFI zero-carbon certification which
10 requires reduction for operationally
11 [inaudible] carbon. High efficiency,
12 low-carbon insulation, high recycled
13 content rebar, no carbon concrete, no
14 emitting material, triple glazing and
15 multi-coating -- [inaudible] are some
16 of the many sustainable practices put
17 into play for the pavilion.

18 The building will be energy
19 efficient, will be composed of a
20 number of energy efficient systems.
21 It will be highly insulated -- it
22 would have a highly insulated
23 envelope. We will provide energy
24 efficient lighting as well as potable
25 water and fixtures.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 And one of the main designed
3 features, as sustainable as we can
4 imagine as well, is its green roof,
5 which you get a little bit of a sense
6 by looking at the top of the
7 pavilion.

8 As so as we move north through
9 the pavilion at that elevation, we
10 then introduce the northern gardens.
11 Again, a place of subtle gathering,
12 passive recreation with ample ways of
13 seating and an incredible display of
14 natural ecology.

15 Now, the next animation, it's
16 going to describe the experience
17 along Battery Place on the street, on
18 the sidewalk. So we wanted to start
19 from being across the street, what it
20 would feel like to actually engage to
21 the park and the rest of the project
22 scope from across. In here we know
23 that we have options, many options to
24 get through the park. But for the
25 purposes of showing you what it's

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 like to walk through that experience
3 along the sidewalk, we're going to
4 walk along the sidewalk. But you
5 also have the option to go through
6 the north allee and gradually,
7 through universal access, get through
8 the gateway entrance to Wagner Park,
9 as well as the entrance to the
10 gardens.

11 Here we're moving through with
12 a heavily vegetated buffer that there
13 also display a number of native
14 planting treatments. We have platted
15 some of the wall treatments along the
16 pavilion along the street with
17 foliage that can drape over.

18 And as we get to the other end,
19 to the southern end of Battery Place,
20 we get a glimpse of the Battery, Pier
21 A Plaza, and just for reforms, we're
22 turning right back into the allee,
23 the south allee which gives us
24 through another universally
25 accessible ramp entry to the park.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 Now we're going move to another set
3 of components of the project which is
4 the Battery and Pier A Plaza. And
5 just for reference, we're turning
6 right back into the allee, the south
7 allee, which gets us to another
8 universally accessible ground entry
9 to the park.

10 Now we're going to move to
11 another set of components of the
12 project, which is the Battery and
13 Pier A Plaza.

14 So for reference, follow the
15 lines so you can understand more as
16 to the walk that we're engaging at
17 the moment.

18 So as you see, we start at the
19 Battery, right, on the existing side
20 of the -- the existing condition of
21 the Battery, to the right you see
22 that bermed passive treatment platted
23 in the form of an earthen berm. And
24 what we've done in and around the
25 berm is to enhance some of the --

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 bring more planting foliage, as
3 similar to the existing conditions of
4 the Battery at the moment.

5 As you see, we have a very
6 distinct sort of definition of both
7 the bikeway and the pedestrian
8 right-of-way. This is now becoming
9 another entrance to the park.

10 The project assignment extends
11 into the bikeway, onto the north side
12 of the Battery. We're using the same
13 material treatments for the ground,
14 same color tones as it exists today
15 for the Battery. And here is a quick
16 peak, as when you look back into the
17 Battery along the flood walls, which
18 is platted with stone treatment, both
19 of sculptural quality, and an
20 opportunity to navigate through the
21 bikeway and also on foot through the
22 Pier A Plaza.

23 We're making a slight turn to
24 the left and looking at up Pier A
25 Plaza from behind. This entire

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 section combines flip-up deployable
3 gates, and also the exposed flood
4 wall as I just mentioned.

5 We have provided a number of
6 landscape public edges in and around
7 the Battery. We believe that there
8 is incredible improvement in
9 circulation. It designates universal
10 access with pedestrian access, with
11 ramp access to the various
12 elevations. And we ensure that we
13 introduce the bikeway in a way that
14 is functional and it would be
15 conflict-free with pedestrian use.

16 So as we get to the north end
17 of the Pier A Plaza, we're making
18 that turn so we can show you how the
19 various levels are connected with the
20 introduction of universal access,
21 plenty of seating, and lots of
22 shading, particularly in the middle
23 of the plaza.

24 A second. And lastly, we
25 wanted to show you a little bit more

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 of the northern gardens. We've
3 basically cut the components: Museum
4 of Jewish Heritage, Wagner Park, Pier
5 A Plaza, the Battery, and even
6 Battery Place. Now we're going to do
7 a final walkthrough through the
8 northern gardens located in Wagner
9 Park.

10 So we're coming from the Museum
11 of Jewish Heritage. These are some
12 of the existing wonderful features,
13 the reflecting pools, and we see how
14 they actually transition into the new
15 project areas in the new project
16 design areas. This is a very
17 important moment because you do have
18 the flexibility of making choices
19 about how you enter the park, whether
20 you do it through the northern
21 gardens on the right, whether you do
22 it through the allee of trees in the
23 center with a very gradual ramp
24 ascending to the main entrance in the
25 park, or when you move through

PUBLIC HEARING

Battery Place along the sidewalk.

So for the purposes of this experiential walk, we're going through the ornamental gardens, which are a series of robust, very colorful, very seasonal, very native planting arrangements for the project. Universally accessible, all ramps meet ADA requirements to a very comfortable level, and we also provide seating and places for you to experience the ever changing foliage that we propose for the park.

Ultimate locations for a cultural treatment in a place where they are celebrated as they are today. They will be celebrated as they are today.

And if we move over to the right we can cut into a series of steps and get to the actual northern edge of Wagner Park, looking south through a set of steps and stairs. Right next to these stairs is the

PUBLIC HEARING

1 ramp that we came up earlier.

2
3 Along the edge of the lawn, you
4 see to the left a lot of planting
5 which actually creates a very nice
6 buffered separation from the lawn.
7 Here is two tiers of flexible lawn
8 use as you move down into the
9 esplanade. This is something that
10 the community was very, very eager to
11 see through, and we believe that it's
12 being achieved well.

13 Right at the center we have a
14 condition that mimics what we have
15 today with social seating, or social
16 steps as we call them. And the
17 exciting thing to note about these
18 social steps is that it's completely
19 accessible, universally accessible.

20 A large place of gathering,
21 similar to the one we have today,
22 overlooking the most breathtaking and
23 most beautiful views of downtown
24 Manhattan into the Statue of Liberty.

25 Then we look back. We're right

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 at the center of the park, onto the
3 very wide esplanade. And just for
4 kicks we wanted to show you what the
5 park looked like from above as we fly
6 over.

7 Can you see my screen?

8 MS. MADONICK: Yes.

9 MR. CRUZ: Perfect. So that
10 concludes this portion of the
11 animation presentation. I hope you
12 enjoyed it, I hope you had a good
13 time viewing them. And as I
14 mentioned earlier, Battery Park City
15 will make them available for you
16 tomorrow. Thank you.

17 Back to you Rachel. Okay.
18 Rene. Sorry.

19 MS. DENCKER: Thank you,
20 Gonzalo.

21 One last project element we did
22 also want to mention are the interior
23 drainage improvements associated with
24 the project. The existing sewer
25 infrastructure crosses underneath our

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1
2 project area, and therefore needs to
3 be isolated to preclude the coastal
4 surge from entering the study area.
5 Please note on the right-hand side,
6 it's not a pretty one, because all
7 this work is actually below grade.

8 So how do we accomplish this
9 interior drainage management system?
10 We implement it in three different
11 types of work. We're installing
12 three tide gates. Two of these are
13 going to be on municipal storm sewer
14 overflows, one at First Place, and a
15 second one at Rector Street. The
16 third tide gate will be installed on
17 the CSO line, which is a combined
18 sewer overflow line at Pier A Plaza.
19 We will also be installing two
20 isolation valves in the Battery. We
21 also have to install a couple of
22 gates within the existing regulator
23 structures that are along West
24 Street.

25 And with that, I'll send it

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1
2 over to Rene Ducker who leads our
3 environmental team. Thank you.

4 MS. DUCKER: Thank you, Rachel.
5 Again, my name is Rene Ducker, and
6 I'm the lead for the environmental
7 team.

8 Tonight I'm going to
9 [inaudible] environmental review
10 process. I'm going to briefly
11 discuss the alternatives, as well as
12 the framework for the environmental
13 review, and our operational and
14 construction impacts.

15 So to summarize the EIS
16 process, the EIS is required by the
17 New York State Environmental Quality
18 Review Act, otherwise known as SEQR.
19 This DEIS addresses the requirements
20 of SEQR and the guidance presented in
21 the City Environmental Quality Review
22 manual. We are following both State
23 and City environmental review
24 processes due to the fact that BPCA
25 is a state authority, and the project

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1
2 area includes City owned property.

3 A positive declaration was
4 issued. And this means an EIS was
5 required. And this began the
6 environmental review process. An
7 important element of the EIS process
8 is to engage the public and agencies
9 throughout the process and provide
10 opportunities to comment.

11 This summary timeline provides
12 an overview of the major documents
13 and public comment periods for this
14 project. A scoping document was
15 issued on September 29th, 2021, and
16 we held a virtual scoping meeting on
17 October 13th, 2021. And the scoping
18 public comment period closed on
19 October 29th, 2021. We published the
20 final scoping document on May 4th,
21 along with the draft Environmental
22 Impact Statement. Both of these
23 documents can be found on BPCA's
24 website.

25 The public comment period for

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 the DEIS will conclude on June 3rd.
3 Comments received from both the
4 public and the agencies will be
5 addressed in the final Environmental
6 Impact Statement.

7 So I'm going to briefly talk
8 about the project and study areas.
9 So the study area includes the flood
10 alignment which extends from First
11 Place through Wagner Park along Pier
12 A Plaza and the Battery. It also
13 includes our interior drainage
14 locations that Rachel just described,
15 and show up in blue boxes along west
16 street on this map, as well as Rector
17 and First Place.

18 So the solid blue line on this
19 map represents our project area,
20 which is the footprint for
21 construction activities. And the
22 dotted line represents the 400-foot
23 area -- study area that was the
24 analysis -- that was where the
25 analysis was conducted.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 So the EIS not only looks at
3 the proposed action, but we also
4 consider the no action condition.
5 And this would be where no
6 comprehensive flood alignment within
7 the study area would be built, and
8 Battery Park City would remain
9 vulnerable to the low inundation
10 flooding and the hundred year storm
11 event. Without flood protection, the
12 study area, including the Museum of
13 Jewish Heritage, Wagner Park, Pier A
14 Plaza, and the Battery would be
15 subject to storm damage from major
16 and minor storm events.

17 The no action condition
18 consists of planned or ongoing
19 projects within the study area.
20 These are projects that are soon to
21 be constructed whether our project is
22 constructed or not.

23 There are two no-build
24 projects. The first is the Battery
25 Coastal Resiliency Project, which is

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 a New York City Economic Development
3 Corporation project, and would
4 connect into our project at Pier A
5 Plaza.

6 The second notable project is
7 the New York City Department of
8 Transportation Battery Park underpass
9 and West Street underpass project.
10 This project would provide protection
11 for the Battery Park and West Street
12 underpasses from future sea level
13 rise and flood damage.

14 So alternatives for the project
15 will also consider for the five
16 segments listed here on the screen.
17 And they were -- individually, due to
18 their differing characteristics in
19 each of these areas. Alternatives
20 were also considered for the interior
21 drainage components.

22 The project team evaluated
23 options for each of these segments,
24 and these are described in detail in
25 section 2.2.2 of the DEIS.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 So I'm going to briefly
3 describe the overall analysis
4 framework for the EIS. So the
5 analysis framework lays out how and
6 what we are going to analysis in the
7 EIS. We are analyzing the 2024 build
8 year because that's when the
9 construction of the project will be
10 completed.

11 Per city and state SEQR, the
12 EIS will evaluate socioeconomic and
13 environmental disciplines. We have
14 to look at both long-term and
15 short-term impacts, as well as
16 mitigation measures if warranted.
17 Long-term impacts are once the
18 project is constructed, and
19 short-term impacts are temporary
20 during the construction of a project.

21 And lastly, for all the
22 socioeconomic and environmental
23 disciplines, we have to consider the
24 unavoidable adverse impacts, growth
25 inducing aspects, and irreversible

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 and irretrievable commitments of
3 resources.

4 So I talked earlier about
5 operational impacts, and these are
6 the impacts during the operation of
7 the project. All of the resources
8 listed here on left reveal no
9 significant adverse impacts as a
10 result of the project. Section three
11 of the EIS provides the analysis that
12 demonstrate why we can prove that no
13 significant adverse impacts for these
14 resources.

15 The two resources listed on the
16 right, "historic and cultural
17 resources" and "urban design and
18 visual resources" had adverse impacts
19 due to the project. And we'll go
20 into more detail on what those
21 impacts were and how they'll be
22 mitigated.

23 As I mentioned, the project
24 does have an adverse impact of
25 historic and cultural resources. The

PUBLIC HEARING

1 project is subject to the regulations
2 set forth in 1409 of the New York
3 State Historical Preservation Act,
4 which is a counterpart to the Federal
5 National Historic Preservation Act.
6

7 As part of 1409 compliance, we
8 have conducted extensive coordination
9 with the State Historic Preservation
10 Office, otherwise known as SHPO, and
11 it has been determined that, first,
12 Wagner Park is eligible for the
13 National Register, and second, there
14 will be an adverse impact on this
15 resource because Wagner Park will be
16 significantly and permanently
17 altered.

18 SHPO concurred that there were
19 no prudent or reasonable alternatives
20 to the project that would avoid or
21 minimize harm to the existing
22 pavilion at Wagner Park. As a result
23 of this, a letter of resolution will
24 be drafted in coordination with SHPO,
25 and this agreement will identify

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 mitigation measures that will be
3 implemented as a result of this
4 impact.

5 Mitigation measures could
6 include an Historical American
7 Landscape Survey, otherwise known as
8 HALS. This is a process to record
9 historical landscapes in the United
10 States and territories for the House
11 collection at the library of
12 Congress. HALS is a well-established
13 mitigation measure used for
14 situations like the one our project
15 presents on historic resources.

16 Documentation of Wagner Park
17 prior to construction would include a
18 physical description, historic
19 overview, a statement of
20 significance, project information,
21 high quality digital or large format
22 photographs, a reproduction of select
23 original plans, and historic
24 photographs.

25 In addition to HALS, other

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1 mitigation measures could include
2 interpretive panels installed at the
3 new Wagner Park that could describe
4 the original park and the reasons why
5 it was deemed an exceptionally
6 significant National Register
7 eligible resource, a website
8 publicized on site or QR codes that
9 can be activated on site and direct
10 users to a history of Wagner Park and
11 the reasons why it was deemed an
12 exceptionally significant National
13 Register eligible resource. The
14 content could be similar to the
15 panels.
16

17 Ultimately, mitigation
18 recommendations that are agreeable to
19 SHPO will be incorporated into the
20 LOR as stipulations, and the LOR will
21 be included in the final
22 Environmental Impact Statement.

23 The project also will have an
24 adverse impact on urban design and
25 visual resources. The project will

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 result in significant adverse effects
3 to piers at two locations, the Hudson
4 River waterfront from Battery Place
5 in the vicinity of Wagner Park
6 pavilion, and the south of the Museum
7 of Jewish Heritage.

8 There are no significant
9 adverse impacts to any other views or
10 urban design as a result of the
11 project. These visual and urban
12 design impacts are minimized by the
13 elevated Wagner Park, recreating
14 unobstructed view of the Statue of
15 Liberty from the new pavilion, as
16 shown here on this graphic, and
17 improved wayfinding. Improved
18 wayfinding signage at Wagner Park
19 entrances and pedestrian and visual
20 enhancements along the Battery Place
21 walkway will lead pedestrians to this
22 recreated view of the Hudson River
23 waterfront and the Statue of liberty.

24 As I mentioned before,
25 construction impacts are also

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 analyzed, and these are temporary,
3 lasting only during the duration of
4 construction. So for our project we
5 have a two-year construction
6 duration. All of the resources
7 listed on the left side revealed no
8 significant adverse impact during
9 construction.

10 Chapter 3.15 of the EIS
11 provides the analysis that
12 demonstrates that why we concluded no
13 significant adverse impacts on these
14 resources. However, open space
15 resources will be adversely impacted
16 during construction, and we'll detail
17 why and how we will mitigate these
18 impacts.

19 The project is proposed to be
20 constructed, as I mentioned, in
21 24 months, and it will involve six
22 major construction tasks. Not all
23 the tasks will start at the same
24 time, nor take the full 24 months to
25 construct, except the Wagner Park and

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 the pavilion. Construction will
3 begin with the pavilion, Museum of
4 Jewish Heritage and Wagner Park,
5 followed by Pier A Plaza, the
6 Battery, and interior drainage
7 components.

8 As a result of these closures
9 there are unavoidable significant
10 adverse impacts to the open space in
11 the project area, and mitigation
12 measures will be implemented which
13 could include the following:

14 During the construction in the
15 Battery, the existing Battery bikeway
16 would remain in service. However, a
17 portion of the existing Battery
18 bikeway would be rerouted to maintain
19 connectivity along the City's bikeway
20 network in Lower Manhattan. The
21 Battery bikeway would be rerouted
22 along the Battery's northern boundary
23 from State Street to West Street.

24 Additionally, to continue to
25 provide public programs and events

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 which have traditionally taken place
3 at Wagner Park, BPCA would
4 temporarily relocate all the programs
5 and events from Wagner Park to other
6 parks and open spaces within Battery
7 Park City during the duration of the
8 project's construction.

9 However, even with the
10 replacement programming, the impacts
11 to open space during construction
12 would not be fully mitigated. BPCA
13 will continue to consider potential
14 options to mitigate these temporary
15 significant adverse impacts during
16 construction.

17 Should other mitigation options
18 be identified, they will be included
19 as part of the final Environmental
20 Impact Statement.

21 So what's next after this
22 public hearing? As we mentioned, the
23 public comment period for the DEIS
24 will conclude on June 3rd, 2022. We
25 expect that the final EIS will be

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 completed in July 2022, and a SEQR
3 finding statement is anticipated in
4 August 2022 which will conclude the
5 environmental review process.

6 So with that, I'm going to turn
7 it over to Nora and she's going to go
8 over how you can comment tonight or
9 through June 3rd.

10 MS. MADONICK: Thank you. So
11 let's take a look at the comment
12 process for tonight's hearing.

13 As I mentioned earlier, BPCA
14 will not be providing responses to
15 any comments or questions that are
16 raised this evening. Comments made
17 and questions raised during tonight's
18 hearing will be addressed in the
19 final Environmental Impact Statement
20 which is expected to be released in
21 summer 2022.

22 Tonight, everyone who
23 preregistered to make a comment will
24 have one opportunity for up to three
25 minutes to state their comment or

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1
2 question. We will unmute each person
3 in the order in which commenters
4 registered to speak. We'll ask each
5 commenter to please identify
6 yourself, and if applicable, the
7 organization on whose behalf you're
8 speaking at the beginning of your
9 comments.

10 I will alert each commenter
11 when you have 30 seconds left to wrap
12 up, and will thank you for your
13 comment at the end of three minutes
14 before moving on to the next
15 commenter.

16 If time allows tonight, we may
17 also be able to hear additional
18 comments from those who did not
19 preregister. And if you have not
20 preregistered and you would like to
21 make a comment tonight, please enter
22 your name, your email, and your
23 address in the QA option in this Zoom
24 webinar. We will hear comments in
25 the order in which commenters post

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1
2 their interest in speaking.

3 If you do not get to finish
4 your comment by the end of your three
5 minutes, please submit your full
6 comments after the hearing by email
7 or mail to Claudia Filomena, BPCA's
8 Director of Capitol Projects at 200
9 Liberty Street, 24th floor, New York,
10 New York, 10281, or
11 claudia.filomena@bpca.ny.gov.

12 So we're going to get started.
13 If you would, Joseph, would you
14 please unmute Wendy Chapman. Wendy,
15 please tell us your name and your
16 affiliation, if you have one.

17 Joseph, have you unmuted Wendy
18 Chapman?

19 MR. SMITH: Yes. Wendy, I
20 believe you have to unmute yourself
21 now that I've given you the option.

22 MS. MADONICK: Wendy, are you
23 having difficulty unmuting? Hard for
24 you to tell. But if you would put a
25 -- you can put a comment in the chat

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 if you are having difficulty. If
3 not, we'll move on to the next
4 commenter and come back to Wendy.

5 MS. CHAPMAN: I'm sorry. Can
6 you hear me now?

7 MS. MADONICK: Yes, we can.
8 Thank you, Wendy.

9 MS. CHAPMAN: Sorry about that,
10 I was having problems with the
11 buttons.

12 MS. MADONICK: No, no.

13 MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you for
14 this update. As I'm on Community
15 Board One, the Environmental
16 Committee, I'm one -- I'm the
17 co-chair with Alice Blank, and we
18 have seen many of these slides over
19 the many years. I was trying to
20 decide how many years it was, but
21 it's at least four. Do you remember
22 how many years we've been working on
23 this? I think it's three or four.

24 But anyway, what I wanted to
25 say is I've reached the acceptance

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 stage that we need to do this. And
3 I've made this comment before, that
4 we need to have more signage in the
5 park, and I know people are working
6 on that, Gwen Dawson said at the
7 least meeting we had that they're
8 working on it. But again, you're
9 breaking ground probably in August,
10 the end of the summer, and I think
11 the signs should have been up in the
12 park months ago.

13 So my biggest criticism of all
14 this beautiful work that you've done
15 is that it will come as a great
16 shock, and people will mourn the loss
17 of Wagner Park and the surrounding
18 areas, and, you know, I think you're
19 getting a lot more backlash than you
20 would have.

21 So I just want -- Community
22 Board One has been on record asking
23 for this for quite some time. So I
24 think I'll stop there. Thank you.

25 MS. MADONICK: Thank you for

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 your comment.

3 We're going to move on to
4 Britni Erez. Joseph, if you would
5 unmute Britni and then Britni you
6 need to unmute yourself.

7 MS. EREZ: Hi. Can you hear
8 me?

9 MS. MADONICK: Yes.

10 MS. EREZ: Hi, yes, thank you.
11 My name is Britni Erez, I'm part of
12 the Battery Park City Neighborhood
13 Association.

14 I just want to say that I would
15 echo Wendy's comment, that the public
16 has almost no idea, the larger public
17 has no idea that this is coming, and
18 it's going to come as quite a shock
19 to much of the public.

20 The other comment that I would
21 like to make is I've gone back and
22 looked at many of the Community Board
23 One's resolutions dating back to
24 2016, 2017 time, and looking at the
25 designs. It's my perspective that

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 much of the feedback has not --
3 material feedback has not been
4 addressed of those resolutions.

5 Thank you very much. I
6 appreciate it.

7 MS. MADONICK: Thank you for
8 your comment.

9 Gregory Sheindlin.

10 MR. SMITH: I don't think
11 Gregory is currently with us.

12 MS. MADONICK: Yes. I saw
13 there was a couple of telephone
14 numbers and I wasn't sure if Gregory
15 was one of those.

16 All right. We'll move forward.
17 Mashi Blech. I also don't see Mashi
18 on the list.

19 Okay. Well, we can come back.
20 David Goodman.

21 MR. SMITH: I'm also not seeing
22 David with us at the moment. I think
23 he was on earlier.

24 MS. MADONICK: Okay. Well, we
25 can come back. Gabrielle Ajami.

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Looking for Gabriel.

MS. AJAMI: Hello?

MS. MADONICK: Yeah.

MS. AJAMI: Hi, can you hear me?

MS. MADONICK: Yes.

MS. AJAMI: Hi. It's Gabrielle Ajami, hi. So I work for Manhattan Youth. I run the downtown day camp, as well as being an administrator of Manhattan Youth.

First of all, it is my pleasure to be here to testify on the Resiliency plan for Battery Park, and while, you know, this isn't the purpose of the meeting, I'd like to give a shout out for the resiliency work and efforts toward Battery Park and the ball fields.

I grew up in, you know, Downtown Manhattan than in Community Board One, and, you know, I know firsthand the importance of sustainability efforts. You know, I

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 grew up enjoying the park, Southern
3 Battery Park City, as well as the
4 ball fields and everything that goes
5 along with it.

6 You know, our community center
7 was flooded -- the Manhattan Youth
8 Community Center was flooded with
9 over \$2 million of damage during
10 Sandy, and in our estimation, we're
11 still not protected. Yet, we applaud
12 the protection of the southern
13 district [inaudible]. We also run
14 the programs at PS 276, and that area
15 is of great importance to us as well
16 as the community.

17 Our founder of Manhattan Youth,
18 Bob Townley, who could not be here
19 tonight -- it was his birthday so we
20 gave him the night off -- was
21 instrumental in advocating not only
22 for the Battery Park City ball field
23 in the 1990s, but he was also on the
24 planning committee for the master
25 plan for Battery Park City

PUBLIC HEARING

[inaudible] parks.

We wanted to acknowledge how important it is to protect Southern Battery Park City, again, for, you know, our community and organization, and everyone [inaudible]. Protecting the institutions of the park of Southern Battery Park City is of huge importance to us at Manhattan Youth, and, you know, we just wanted to say thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan and for, you know, continuing to allow us to be a part of the conversation and knowing what's going on and up to date.

So thank you.

MS. MADONICK: Thank you.
Thank you for your comment.

Elyse Buxbaum. Joseph, if you would -- I saw Elyse.

MS. BUXBAUM: Can you hear me okay?

MS. MADONICK, Yes. We can.

MS. BUXBAUM: Wonderful. Thank

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 you. Good evening, and I really
3 appreciate the opportunity to speak
4 about the South Battery Park City
5 Resiliency project. My name is Elyse
6 Buxbaum. I am a member of the
7 downtown community where I live with
8 my family, but I am also the
9 Executive Vice President of the
10 Museum of Jewish Heritage, a living
11 memorial to the holocaust. We're at
12 36 Battery Place, we're right off the
13 Hudson, and we're in the middle of
14 the Resiliency Project.

15 Our work: We are an essential
16 cultural and educational resource
17 serving 200,000 visitors annually
18 including 60,000 students. And this
19 Resiliency Project really provides
20 critical protection to the museum,
21 and especially the 35,000
22 irreplaceable personal artifacts in
23 our collection.

24 We sustained severe flood
25 damage from Sandy and more recently

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1
2 from Irma. The impact was both
3 physical and financial. And it's
4 urgent that we complete this work
5 before the next big storm.

6 The museum has engaged in
7 multi-collaborative dialogue with
8 BPCA to ensure our strategic and
9 operational needs are met. So, in
10 fact, my first meeting at the museum
11 was in December 2019 regarding this
12 resiliency work, so I'm glad to see
13 as we're moving forward. And along
14 the way, BPCA has been very receptive
15 to our feedback.

16 For example, they agreed to
17 abide by noise restrictions, and
18 they've ensured vibration tracking by
19 a third-party monitoring system so
20 that our exhibitions and visitors are
21 not disturbed and so that the safety
22 of the objects in our building are
23 not jeopardized. And now they're
24 working with us towards a solution
25 regarding the use of our driveway and

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access to our loading dock.

The flood bearing system has been designed in a very thoughtful way. It does justice to the public space, which is so critical to our community, and it not only preserves and protects the park land surrounding the museum, but enhances it for further generations.

I just want to say thank you for the work that you're doing.

MS. MADONICK: Thank you for your comment. Elijah Hutchinson.

MR. HUTCHINSON: Hi. Can you hear me?

MS. MADONICK: Yes, we can.

MR. HUTCHINSON: Excellent, thanks.

Hi, I'm Elijah Hutchinson, Vice President of Waterfronts at the New York City Economic Development Corporation. And thank you all for allowing me to express my support for this critical resiliency project

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 serving Battery Park City.

3 Lower Manhattan Coast
4 Resilience is a series of
5 interconnected coastal resilience
6 projects done in partnership with the
7 Mayor's Office of Climate and
8 Environmental Justice that together
9 will protect Lower Manhattan from
10 both regular tidal inundation and
11 storm that would other pose an
12 existential threat to these
13 communities.

14 At the Economic Development
15 Corporation I lead the planning and
16 early design of our coastal
17 protection portfolio of projects,
18 including Lower Manhattan Coastal
19 Resilience, which is includes
20 Brooklyn Bridge Montgomery Coastal
21 Resilience, and the Two Bridges
22 neighborhood, the Financial District
23 Seaport Climate Resilience Master
24 Plan, Seaport Coastal Resilience, and
25 the Seaport and the Battery Coastal

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 Resilience at the Battery Wharf to
3 have that Wharf be reconstructed to
4 be more resilient.

5 Together, these projects make
6 up a coordinated multi-agency
7 initiative to make Lower Manhattan
8 stronger, fulfilling a vision going
9 back about ten years ago to when the
10 concept of the big U was first
11 introduced through Rebuild By Design,
12 a federal competition of innovative
13 infrastructure projects that
14 integrate forward-looking
15 infrastructure with community
16 servicing uses.

17 It is critical that all of the
18 coastal resilience projects advance
19 so that portions of the shoreline are
20 not left unprotected from the threats
21 of coastal storm surge, extreme
22 rainfall, frequent tidal inundation
23 and heat. Without these projects we
24 leave one of the fastest growing
25 residential communities, and one of

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 the largest central business
3 districts in the country at risk.

4 Lower Manhattan is where a
5 critical transportation, drainage,
6 water, sewers, utilities and maritime
7 infrastructure severing the entire
8 city and region intersect. And this
9 is why we have already invested over
10 a billion dollars to advance these
11 projects.

12 What we have learned since
13 beginning our participation with BPCA
14 through Lower Manhattan Coastal
15 Resilience projects are inherently
16 cross-jurisdictional between
17 agencies, require careful
18 coordination between many city and
19 state agencies, and will produce
20 wide-ranging benefits to the
21 community beyond mitigating the
22 impacts of a changing climate.

23 These projects will make sure
24 schools don't have to shut down for
25 long period of times like what we

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 experienced during Sandy, that our
3 subways can continue running, that
4 our roads are clear from flooding for
5 emergency vehicles, that residents
6 can return to their homes and that
7 small businesses can thrive.

8 These projects are about the
9 long-term health and safety of our
10 communities, about protecting
11 investments made by families for
12 future generations, and about making
13 sure we can literally keep the lights
14 on.

15 These projects also allow us to
16 rebuild public open space to be
17 climate resilient so that they can
18 continue to benefit future
19 generations for this community. And
20 this is why EDC looks forward to our
21 continued partnership and ensuring
22 Lower Manhattan is climate ready and
23 it can serve all New Yorkers as a
24 place to work, visit, or just catch a
25 ferry. And these projects are our

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 opportunity to bring these
3 waterfronts into the 21st century.

4 Thank you so much forgive me
5 the opportunity to comment.

6 MS. MADONICK: Thank you.
7 Brian Robinson.

8 MR. ROBINSON: Yes. Can you
9 hear me?

10 MS. MADONICK: Yes, we can.

11 MR. ROBINSON: Okay. So I am
12 Brian Robinson. I don't have any
13 affiliation per se. I should, with
14 full disclosure, just let you know
15 that I am a Democratic candidate for
16 congress, and I'm also a Tribecian,
17 my daughter plays in Wagner Park, and
18 I'm concerned about the pretense of
19 why it needs to close. I'm all for
20 climate change mitigation, and we of
21 course want to protect our city, but
22 citing Hurricane Sandy as a
23 justification to close a park that
24 our kids enjoy on a daily basis is a
25 little disingenuous when Wagner Park

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 did not actually flood during
3 Hurricane Sandy.

4 This park will close for two
5 years, and I'm just not sold that
6 it's worth it. I would like to hear
7 more information -- I'm not saying
8 that it's not a legitimate project --
9 but just from looking at the details,
10 it doesn't strike me as completely
11 legitimate. And when I look at
12 NASA's Goddard Institute of Climate,
13 according to a study done in Lower
14 Manhattan quite recently in the last
15 few years, sea level in New York City
16 has risen on an average of 0.27
17 centimeters per year, and it's
18 expected that sea levels in the area
19 will rise on an average of
20 0.38 centimeters per year, or
21 anywhere from 0.175 to 0.6.

22 So over a 20 year span that
23 amounts to less than four inches.
24 And while it was stated that Wagner
25 Park is in jeopardy because it's,

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1
2 what, 7 to 10 feet up, that still
3 puts it nowhere near any real danger
4 or threat, in the next 50 years at
5 that rate.

6 So I'd like to hear more. I
7 don't like to see green space
8 disappear. I'm not against climate
9 change mitigation or, you know, flood
10 mitigation, but it's just not adding
11 up for me at this point. Thank you
12 for letting me testify.

13 MS. MADONICK: Thank you for
14 your comment. Stacy Pennebaker
15 (phonetic).

16 MS. PENNEBAKER: Can you hear
17 me?

18 MS. MADONICK: We can.

19 MS. PENNEBAKER: Good. My name
20 is Stacy Pennebaker. I'm a resident,
21 as the previous caller just said, of
22 Battery Park City, and I just wanted
23 to, I guess, first of all, thank the
24 board for a very good preparation.
25 It was very nice. I am very -- you

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1
2 know, I'm surprised and pleased.

3 But I wanted to make a
4 comparison, I guess at this stage, to
5 Japan, in March 2011 had a huge
6 earthquake and then a tsunami --
7 tidal wave as a result of the
8 earthquake. And they had sea walls
9 all along the northern east part of
10 Japan, and none of it worked. They
11 had sea walls up to 10 to 15 feet
12 high. And I have pictures, I have
13 articles, et cetera, showing the
14 process of the flooding, and it
15 didn't do -- helpful.

16 But it also gave a full moral
17 hazard, created a moral hazard, and
18 that, as a result, a lot of people
19 stuck around or didn't act quickly
20 enough and a lot of deaths as a
21 result of people thinking they were
22 safe and protected.

23 So I just want to bring up
24 another example of -- perhaps another
25 consideration. But I thank the board

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1
2 for my testimony and I appreciate it.
3 Thank you. Bye-bye.

4 MS. MADONICK: Thank you. So I
5 want to remind everyone who is on the
6 call that if you have not yet
7 registered to speak and you would
8 like to comment tonight, enter your
9 name, email, and address in the QA
10 portion of the option of the Zoom
11 webinar. And we will get to you as
12 soon as we can.

13 I just want to check in with
14 the speakers that we called on
15 earlier that did not respond.
16 Gregory Sheindlin? Make sure is has
17 not here. Okay. Because I see we
18 have a couple of telephone numbers.
19 David Goodman. And Mashi Blech.

20 Okay. I'm going to move on to
21 Christopher Marte, Council Member.

22 MR. MARTE: Hi, can you hear
23 me?

24 MS. MADONICK: Yes we can.

25 MR. MARTE: First of all, I

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1
2 want to thank you for the
3 presentation. I thought it was very
4 thorough and I enjoyed the video
5 portion, just to have a better
6 perspective on what it's going to
7 look like.

8 My main comment for this
9 evening is going to be about the
10 barrier of entrance -- acces for
11 ordinary residents to actually have a
12 say in this process. Even signing up
13 for this meeting, one had to create
14 an account with Eventbrite and go
15 through pages to actually be
16 registered.

17 And I hope Battery Park City
18 Authority Board, along with their
19 consultant, work with my office and
20 state elected official offices, to
21 engage with residents who are
22 honestly surprised about what's going
23 on, though this has been in the works
24 for years and you have [inaudible]
25 board.

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1
2 And so we want to make sure not
3 only that signs are up, as when the
4 others mentioned earlier, but that we
5 do more direct outreach to the people
6 who live there, the people who enjoy
7 the space so they can actually have a
8 voice in this process and be able to
9 engage before the deadline ends later
10 this summer. But thank you again for
11 this presentation.

12 MS. MADONICK: Thank you.

13 MR. MARTE: And finally, I'd
14 just like to say we desperately need
15 resiliency, and I support the
16 project, but I think there's a lot of
17 comments and insights that residents
18 can provide on what to do with
19 spaces, in particular, Wagner Park.
20 Thank you.

21 MS. MADONICK: Thank you. I
22 see a hand up from a Danielle
23 Tommaso. Danielle, is there
24 something I can help you with? Did
25 you want to register, you had

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 difficulty registering?

3 Please remember, if you would
4 like to speak, go to the QA on the
5 Zoom and please enter your name and
6 your affiliation.

7 I also see a hand up from
8 Martha Gallow. Martha, are you
9 having difficulty registering your
10 name? Nope. There you go.

11 Alice Blank.

12 MS. BLANK: Okay. Hi there.
13 Hi, I'm Alice Blank. I'm Vice Chair
14 of Community Board one and Chair of
15 the Environmental Protection
16 Committee, and I know you all very --
17 well some of you I don't know,
18 there's new folks -- but many of you
19 very well over the years we've worked
20 together tirelessly on this project,
21 along with all the others. And I
22 want to thank you for all the
23 incredible hard work that has been
24 done in producing this DEIS.

25 I did want to just reiterate a

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1
2 request -- first of all, the
3 community board will be, of course,
4 responding to this, as we have done
5 for the last five years, with
6 resolutions, as Wendy Chapman, our
7 co-chair has mentioned and others. A
8 lot of what we had worked on together
9 did not get realized yet, but we
10 appreciate the level of exchange and
11 would like and hope for more.

12 And in that vein I wanted to
13 ask something that came up at our
14 last board meeting just this week was
15 a request to extend the comment
16 period past June 3rd to allow the
17 folks that did not know about this,
18 had not yet seen the document, which
19 was kind of difficult to access for
20 some of us, whether or not that could
21 be done.

22 So that's -- I don't expect an
23 answer right here now, but I did want
24 to again reiterate that request on
25 behalf of CB1. And as I said, we

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1
2 will be, of course, submitting
3 comment. Thank you.

4 MS. MADONICK: I apologize.
5 There was a question to make a second
6 comment. Comments are being limited
7 to one comment per person tonight.
8 And there was also a question in the
9 chat about whether the recording
10 would be made available to watch, and
11 it will.

12 If anyone, else would like to
13 comment, if you would put your name
14 and affiliation in the QA, I'd be
15 happy to call on you.

16 And I just want to double check
17 again, Gregory Sheindlin? David
18 Goodman?

19 Okay. We have no speaker
20 requests at this time. The hearing
21 will remain open until 9:00. So
22 could we put up the "no speakers
23 currently" slide, please.

24 So during this time when there
25 are no speakers, you can separately

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 enter your name and address in the QA
3 and we will call on speakers when we
4 have more speakers available.

5 Dorothy Lipsky, I noted you
6 made a comment in the chat. If you
7 would like to make a comment into the
8 hearing, please enter your name and
9 address in the QA and I'll be happy
10 to call on you.

11 So there was a question asked
12 whether there was an opportunity to
13 ask questions and have them answered.
14 Tonight is a time for the -- for BPCA
15 to hear from the public. BPCA will
16 not be providing responses to
17 comments or questions this evening.
18 However, comments made and questions
19 raised will be addressed in the final
20 Environmental Impact Statement, and
21 you can expect that to be released in
22 summer 2022.

23 And again, if for any reason
24 you don't want to make an oral
25 statement tonight, you can certainly

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1
2 submit your comments or questions in
3 writing via mail to Claudia Filomena
4 at BPCA's Director of Capital
5 Projects at 200 Liberty Street, 24th
6 floor, New York, New York 10281 or by
7 email to
8 claudia.filomena@bpca.ny.gov.

9 I note there are a few people
10 posting comments in chat. You'll
11 want to send those by email or by
12 mail, as I just explained.

13 Someone asked that I repeat the
14 address and email for comments. And
15 I wonder if whoever is controlling
16 the presentation could -- thank you
17 very much.

18 (Whereupon, there were no
19 speakers from 7:25 P.M. to 7:33 P.M.)

20 MS. MADONICK: So we have no
21 active speakers at this time. If you
22 have not yet spoken during hearing
23 and you would like to do so, please
24 put your name and contact information
25 in the QA option of the Zoom webinar

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and I will call on you.

(Whereupon, there were no speakers from 7:33 P.M. to 7:37 P.M.)

MS. MADONICK: [Inaudible]
Vega?

MS. VEGA: Do you hear me?

MS. MADONICK: Yes, we do.

MS. VEGA: Okay. Hi, thank you. I actually have two comments regarding this Battery Park Resiliency Project.

The first comment is that I don't think that the cost-benefit works best to our community. My understanding is that the project will be built in order to prevent damage from some hundred year storm that we expect to happen, even some predicted sea level rise.

However, how does this compare to how much this project is going to cost? How would the damage from this legendary storm compare to how much we're going to spend on this project.

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 Because we have to bear in mind that
3 the cost of this project are a
4 certainty, while the storm is just
5 probable. And I yet have to see any
6 public project that has not gone way
7 over budget and way over time in
8 building. So this is my first point.

9 My second point is that I
10 remember that during Hurricane Sandy,
11 the sea wall was breached near
12 Chelsea which then turned the West
13 Side Highway into a riverbed. And I
14 don't understand how addressing some
15 portion while not addressing all of
16 the possible low places where, you
17 know, the sea wall can be breached is
18 going to help.

19 As we know, water runs and
20 tries to find the lowest elevation.
21 So just elevating some portion, I
22 don't see how it's going to help at
23 all, just spend more money. Thank
24 you.

25 MS. MADONICK: Thank you for

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 your comment.

3 Mashì Blech.

4 Joseph, did you -- thank you.

5 Mashì.

6 MS. BLECH: You can hear me?

7 MS. MADONICK: Yes.

8 MS. BLECH: Okay, great.

9 I actually think the previous
10 speaker, commenter is correct. It's
11 not an option for New York, Lower
12 Manhattan particularly, to do
13 nothing. I think the evidence is
14 clear that we -- even today I
15 encourage everybody to read the
16 broadsheet, because there's an
17 excellent article in it today about
18 an objective report from the National
19 Oceanic and Atmospheric
20 Administration.

21 It's not an option to do
22 nothing, and it's not an option just
23 for Battery Park City to do
24 something. All of Lower Manhattan is
25 going to have to take action. And I

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1
2 think Battery Park City will just be
3 the first group to do it, and then,
4 of course, the rest of Lower
5 Manhattan is going to have to find
6 funding, but it's not -- to survive.
7 We're not going to be able to
8 [inaudible] into many places that are
9 -- with the rising sea levels and
10 seeing the devastation there. And
11 for the places that did nothing, it
12 was just devastating.

13 So it is costly, but I don't
14 see that we have a choice to just do
15 nothing, and I think that it's
16 imperative for us as a community to
17 take this seriously and not just hope
18 for the best.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. MADONICK: Thank you.

21 Again, if you would like to
22 comment tonight or haven't registered
23 yet, you can put your name and your
24 address and email in the QA option of
25 the webinar, the Zoom webinar, and we

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1
2 will call on you.

3 (Whereupon, there were no
4 speakers from 7:43 P.M. to 7:56 P.M.)

5 MS. MADONICK: Whomever is
6 controlling the presentation, please
7 put the next slide up. Thank you.

8 I knew a few people have signed
9 opposed. If you wish to make a
10 comment for this public hearing,
11 please put your name and contact
12 information in the QA option of this
13 Zoom webinar and you will be called
14 on.

15 (Whereupon, there were no
16 speakers from 7:57 P.M. to 8:10 P.M.)

17 MS. MADONICK: Bejal Shah.

18 MS. SHAH: Yes, thank you.
19 Good evening.

20 My name is Bejal, and I'm a
21 Tribeca resident, and I'm also a
22 parent of three young children. I
23 have lived in this area for over a
24 decade, and in fact, I lived through
25 Hurricane Sandy as a FIDA (phonetic)

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 resident at the time.

3 I absolutely support
4 resiliency, but I'm troubled that
5 this project does not take into
6 account the needs of the community.
7 The families that live in Lower
8 Manhattan are looking for more active
9 green spaces, spaces for children to
10 run and play. And the neighborhood
11 is already short on field space with
12 the growing number of families in the
13 area. My children participate in the
14 soccer leagues and the baseball
15 leagues, and they are at maximum
16 capacity, and looking for other
17 creative ways to create more field
18 space.

19 And, you know, looking at this
20 project, there are so many other
21 alternatives that could be -- instead
22 of commercial space, the neighborhood
23 has enough commercial space and
24 establishments, and it shouldn't be,
25 especially at the expense of any park

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1
2 space.

3 This neighborhood has community
4 centers and gathering spaces for
5 adults, and those space are already
6 underutilized. So it's clear to me
7 from the information that's been
8 disseminated on this project that the
9 community's needs won't be met.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. MADONICK: Thank you for
12 your comment.

13 And again, if anyone, else
14 would like it comment, please place
15 your name and address and email into
16 the QA option on this webinar and
17 you'll be called on.

18 (Whereupon, there were no
19 speakers from 8:12 P.M. to 8:45 P.M.)

20 MS. MADONICK: There are about
21 15 minutes left in tonight's hearing.
22 If you would like to make a comment
23 and haven't done so yet tonight,
24 please put your name and contact
25 information into the QA option of the

PUBLIC HEARING

1
2 Zoom webinar and I will be happy to
3 call on you.

4 (Whereupon, there were no
5 speakers from 8:46 P.M. to 8:55 P.M.)

6 MS. MADONICK: There are about
7 five minutes left to this hearing.
8 If you have not spoken and would like
9 to, please put your name and contact
10 information in the QA on the webinar
11 and I will be happy too call on you.

12 (Whereupon, there were no
13 speakers from 8:55 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.)

14 MS. MADONICK: I'd like to
15 thank you for attending the public
16 hearing on the draft Environmental
17 Impact Statement for the South
18 Battery Park City Resiliency Project.
19 The Battery Park City Authority
20 appreciates your interest in the
21 project and your participation in
22 tonight's public hearing. Comments
23 will be accepted until June 3rd.
24 This hearing is now ended.

25 (Time noted: 9:00 P.M.)

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PUBLIC HEARING
C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK)
: SS.:
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER)

I, NATHAN DAVIS, a Notary Public for
and within the State of New York, do hereby
certify:

That the above is a correct
transcription of my stenographic notes.

I further certify that I am not
related to any of the parties to this
action by blood or by marriage and that I
am in no way interested in the outcome of
this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
set my hand this 26th day of May 2022.



NATHAN DAVIS

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